Collaborative Learning Initiatives in Integrated Coastal Management

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Donna Nickerson and Stephen B. Olsen

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* Global Water Partnership (GWP) Secretariat
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Purpose of the Review

Our knowledge and experience with applying comprehensive approaches to resource management has evolved to the extent where we can not only capture lessons from experience, but also develop reliable guidance for improved integrated resource management approaches in the future. Several of these collaborative learning initiatives are underway to systematically assess and learn across international resource management experience. Collaborative learning is a strategy for breaking out of the usual one-by-one performance evaluation process and for putting a greater effort into scanning across the practice and periodically coming together to discuss what is being learned and the implications of such learning.

The benefits of collaborative learning activities extend beyond advancing knowledge on targeted integrated coastal management (ICM) themes. Collaborative learning initiatives help to:

❖ Articulate a common vision among ICM professionals, donors and partners on the purposes and goals of ICM

❖ Provide a forum to enhance cooperation, communication and exchange of information across ICM institutions

❖ Develop international donor standards and guidance on good practices for ICM investments

❖ Promote greater synergism and consolidate efforts among current and future donor initiatives and among coastal management ideas, strategies and products

❖ Formulate more comprehensive response strategies for donor-funded ICM, and transfer ideas and products for field application

❖ Provide operational content for global treaties and agreements that recommend the use of ICM

The purpose of this review was to analyze a diverse set of collaborative learning examples with particular attention to the goals, structures and activities of the networks. To the extent possible, accomplishments and key

factors of success in network management were identified. The results of the review will help guide the development of a collaborative learning initiative for Latin America, thus enabling leaders in coastal management to increase their potential for achievement and to advance ICM in the region.

Results of the Review

Three networks were reviewed. These networks represent a wide spectrum:

❖ The well-funded and mature network of the Global Water Partnership (GWP)

❖ The smaller-scale Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA) Network that has been able to bring projects from two regions together to improve their management of marine areas

❖ The Integrated Coastal Management Sustainability Project that has had a number of accomplishments in only a short time

The review of each network observes its origins; goals; structure; funding; activities; accomplishments where available; and key factors of successful management. The origin of each network is included for two reasons. First, the origins or purpose for which it was formed had an important effect on the structure of the network. Second, the motivation behind the formation of the network could be a potential factor in the success of the network.

Program	Budget (US$)	Time Frame	Geographic Scope
GWP	12.58 million (2002)	1996 to permanent	Global
LMMA	200,000 (2002)	2000-2005	Indo-Pacific Region
ICM Sustainability		2001-2003	Philippines, Indonesia

Program One
Global Water Partnership

By Donna Nickerson, with contributions from Ann Milton (Global Water Partnership Secretariat)

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Origins

The Global Water Partnership (GWP), established in 1996, is the oldest network of those reviewed. Its funding level is high, with a multimillion dollar annual budget. It is useful to include in the review for comprehensive organizational structure, the techniques it uses in the "ToolBox," and its methods of working and coordinating with its partners at all levels. It represents one of the most mature resource management networks and can therefore offer a number of lessons learned.

The need for a network that offered a more comprehensive approach to water management worldwide was articulated by the participants of two conferences in 1992 (i.e., the Dublin Conference on Water and the Environment, and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro). This awareness, together with the need for participatory institutional mechanisms related to water, led to the formation of the GWP as a new coordinating organization to promote and implement integrated water resources management (IWRM).

Goals

The goal of the GWP is to support countries in the sustainable management of their water resources by promoting the concept of IWRM. IWRM takes a broad view of water management problems, examines a comprehensive range of solutions, and considers how different actions affect each other. Thus, IWRM places novel demands on the policymaker, operator and water-user, but offers a more comprehensive, efficient and powerful approach than those tried before.

To promote IWRM, GWP works to influence decisionmakers at all levels of water resources management by establishing partnerships and mobilizing political will; building strategic alliances for action; developing good practice in IWRM; and developing and implementing regional actions. From the start, GWP's emphasis was to move beyond the status quo and pull together financial, technical, political and human resources to address the critical issues of sustainable water management. To achieve this goal, GWP's objectives are to:

❖ Clearly establish the principles of sustainable water resources management

❖ Identify gaps and stimulate partners to meet critical needs within their available human and financial resources

❖ Support action at the local, national, regional or river basin level that follows principles of sustainable water resources management

❖ Help match needs to available resources

Despite their capacity for devastation, floods are a natural part of the hydrological cycle, and can be highly beneficial. They flush pollutants and sediment out of the river networks and distribute irrigation water and fertile alluvial deposits across flood plains. (Photo Courtesy of the *GWP 2001 annual report*)

STRUCTURE

The GWP network promotes and supports understanding of the implementation of the IWRM strategy for conserving water resources. The wide ranging structure of the GWP has less to do with the scope of its global geographic focus, and more to do with managing the diverse expectations of the network participants. The different expectations simply represented different ways to approach the problem of improving water management. Each approach has merit. To manage these diverse ideas into one constructive design was perhaps the first task of the GWP management.

The participants were divided as to the role that the GWP should take on, and while the initial vision meetings were useful in bringing participants together on the general goals and objectives of the network, the expectations on how it would best go about achieving the objectives were divided. Expectations ranged from seeing the GWP as a mechanism for action; as a forum for information exchange; as a facilitator; or as a generator of financing. Another dilema was whether the GWP should be structured around thematic priorities or regional priorities. However, because of a strong leadership that managed these conflicts between interests and participants, the differences in expectations were viewed as each having important components to include into the network. The result was effective. The network structure of the GWP combined rather than excluded the expectations; each was important in helping to achieve the goal of improving water resources management. This helped lead towards the later achievements of establishing a common vision and gaining participation from multiple sectors.

CORE DECISIONMAKING AND LEADERSHIP GROUPS

Consulting Partners

Consulting Partners are the members of GWP. The Consulting Partners meet once a year to review reports from the Steering and Technical Committees, appoint the chair of the Partnership, and elect and appoint members of the Steering Committee. These meetings are open to observers for information exchange and discussions.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee acts as a Board of Directors and meets twice a year. Committee members are elected by the Consulting Partners and appointed for three years. There are 22 committee members including ex officio members. Gender balance on the committee, and throughout the GWP, is given high priority.

The Technical Committee (TEC)

The TEC consists of 12 internationally recognized professionals selected for their experience in different disciplines relating to IWRM. The TEC provides professional and scientific advice to GWP's members and Consulting Partners by:

❖ Performing analyses of strategic issues impacting on water management

❖ Facilitating and supporting the development of GWP programs

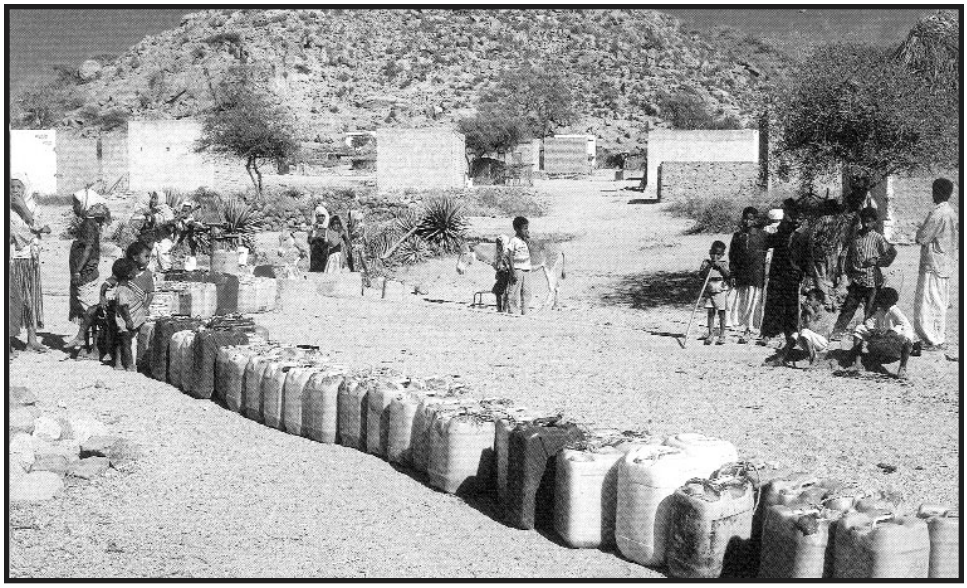
❖ Giving advice and guidance on IWRM priorities and development of IWRM proposals

❖ Identifing and performing evaluations of the Associated Programs

All the members of the TEC serve in their personal capacity and devote around 30 working days per year to the task.

Financial Partners

External support agencies that are interested in water resources management are brought together twice a year by the GWP to provide a forum for information exchange and debate on the water priorities that need to be addressed and the criteria for providing financial assistance to various IWRM initiatives. To extend the forum, GWP has recently teamed up with the Third World Water Forum and the Dialogue on Water, Food and the Environment. The current main donors to GWP are the governments of: Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, and The World Bank. Other donors give smaller contributions; for example, support to the printing of a publication, or a certain activity. One example of such a donor is the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which has supported the production of case studies for the ToolBox.



People lack access to clean drinking water. Villagers in the Keren Region of Eritrea line up at a well that is running dry. (Photo Courtesy of the *GWP 2001 annual report*)

Secretariat

In cooperation with the TEC Chair, the Executive Secretary is responsible for the implementation of the GWP work program. Hosted by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) in Stockholm, Sweden, the Secretariat provides support to the Executive Secretary, the TEC and other GWP committees, and the GWP regional partnerships in the areas of governance, finance, communications, planning, and operational management of GWP programs and administration.

The Secretariat recently became an intergovernmental organization. The change evolved largely because it was felt that as a rapidly growing global organization, GWP could not in the long run continue to be hosted by a governmental donor organization that is ruled by national legislation. The transition date from GWP to GWP Organization (GWPO) is July 2002. Operational changes at the office level include new rules for staff; new accounting and archive system; and creation of a new information technology policy. These changes will not affect the informal structure including the status of the regional and country partnerships or the associated programs.

Resource Centers

Three resource centers provide additional support in strategic and programmatic areas to GWP, and a range of support services to the Secretariat and TEC Chair. These are the DHI-Institute of Water and Environment, Denmark; HR Wallingford, UK; and the International Water Management Institute, Sri Lanka.

Network Structure

Regional Partnerships

Since its inception, GWP has built a network of regional partnerships in South America, Central America, Southern Africa, West Africa, the Mediterranean, Central and Eastern Europe, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and, most recently, in China. These regional partnerships bring various sector and interest groups together to identify and discuss their common water problems and to develop action plans based on IWRM. Objectives include:

❖ Set up a fully functional, sustainable and participatory regional set of country water partnerships which have supporting mechanisms capable of promoting regional cooperation through networking, and advancing IWRM issues and activities in the region and countries.

❖ Incorporate the principles of IWRM into national water security policies and strategies for implementation at national and river basin level. IWRM is seen to be the key if the countries in the region are to meet the water supply requirements of their growing populations and support their continued development.

❖ Generate and disseminate knowledge on critical IWRM measures, especially on river basin management. It has been long recognized that the river basin is the ideal management unit to address water-related problems. ICRM in river basins allows planners and managers to take all the natural aspects of water resources, sectoral and stakeholder's interests, and the spatial variations of resources and needs into consideration.

❖ Establish guidelines to assist countries develop adequate institutional frameworks and enabling legislation to avoid the fragmented and sectoral approach to water management found in most member countries.

❖ Increase the capacity of professionals to implement IWRM.

The partnerships are further supported by Regional Technical Advisory Committees. These independent regional groups promote the application of IWRM as a critical approach to managing the world's water resources. Each regional advisory committee has its own work plan to facilitate and support the preparation and implementation by various countries within the region of their own Program for Action for Water Security. This support will help enable each country to achieve their own respective national vision for water.

Regional forums are held regularly, and GWP hosts annual meetings where regional representatives can exchange ideas and information between regions.

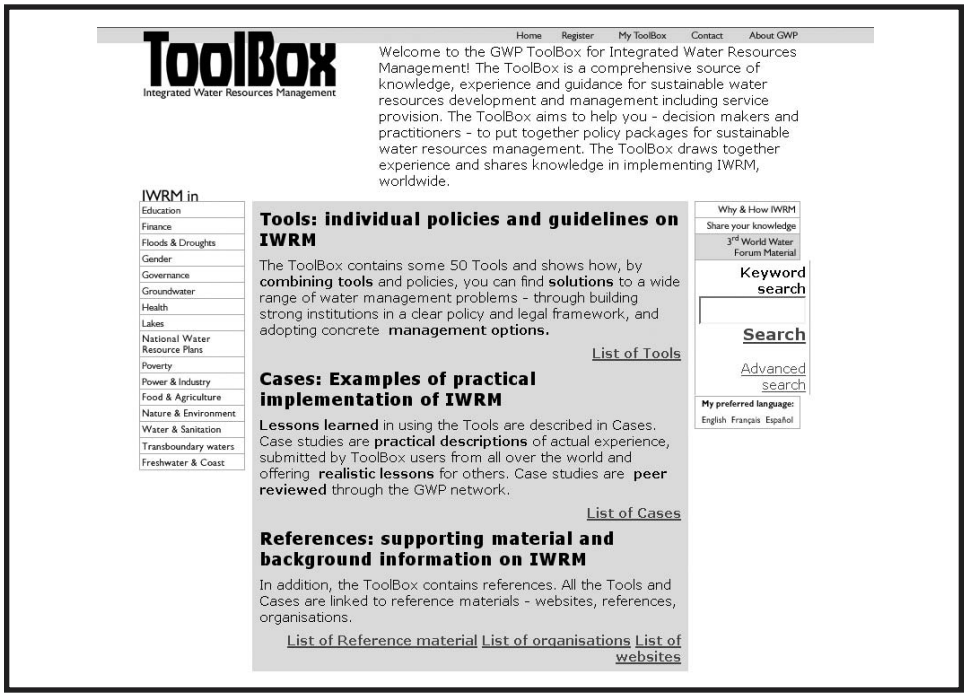
Offering Technical Tools and Support

The ToolBox

The purpose of GWP's ToolBox on IWRM is to provide water management professionals clear examples of good and bad practices as lessons learned from real life experiences. The ToolBox builds on previous water management experience, providing a forum for sharing knowledge and experience. It offers easy access to practical, non-prescriptive advice, information on how to establish IWRM in a practical context and factors in the complexities and restraints of the site. The ToolBox offers a compendium of over 50 policies and actions or tools for putting IWRM into practice. Each tool is illustrated by real case experiences, which give examples of how a tool has worked in a given combination and context. In this way, the network constituents can learn from earlier cycles of governance. The ToolBox standardizes information between initiatives within countries and regions, and between levels of network participants.

The ToolBox is organized into four main parts: policy guidance; operational tools; case studies, which support the use of tools; and references, organizations and websites. The structure for the tools in the ToolBox is based on three fundamental elements of IWRM:

1. The enabling environment (i.e., legislation, policy and financing structures)



The ToolBox contains options, or tools, related to specific policies and actions for putting integrated water resources management into practice. It provides keyword search features, interlinking of data and relationships, and case studies that provide information on the use of the tools and their effectiveness in specific situations. (Photo Courtesy of the *GWP 2001 annual report*)

2. Capacity building of resource managers, service providers, irrigation agencies, utilities, river basin authorities, regulators and other water sector stakeholders

3. Management instruments—water resources assessment, demand management, public information and education, conflict resolution, regulatory devices, economic measures, and information and communications

A major achievement was the development of procedures and processes for preparation and review of cases illustrating the use of the tools. This was developed by the TEC, and the progress in the content and case development of the ToolBox surpassed expectations. The IWRM ToolBox Version 1 was presented to a broad audience of decisionmakers and water professionals. It is now being employed and reviewed by users and an improved Version 2 will be launched by March 2003.

Providing Support to Regions and Countries Through GWP's Associated Programs

GWP's associated programs provide required strategic support to the regions and countries. These programs include advice on management approaches, policy awareness and dialogue, and expert knowledge and information, and help with research, development and training. These programs are run and hosted independently within different organizations, but coordinated by GWP. GWP's TEC reviews the proposed services for relevance and applicability. One example is the Ground Water Management Advisory Team (GW-MATE). Within The World Bank-Netherlands Water Partnership Program, the Bank has established GW-MATE. GW-MATE is a core group of experienced specialists in the multidisciplinary and multifaceted area of groundwater management. GW-MATE offers strategic assistance in full consultation with stakeholders by:

❖ Providing advice on groundwater resource management and protection, and on the role of governments, and associated policy and institutional issues

❖ Helping to mobilize stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of improved management systems

❖ Developing a network of specialists in groundwater management and protection on both a regional and sub-discipline basis

❖ Disseminating best-practice elements internationally through the provision of briefing guides and short courses

In the future, GW-MATE plans to disseminate experiences of good practice in groundwater management—a process that is embedded in the wider context of IWRM. The team will act globally over a period of three to five years to develop capacity and capability in groundwater resource management and protection. The strategy is to use The World Bank project activities, together with GWP regional networks, as the points of entry to achieve this goal.

Funding

See the "Financial Partners" section for a list of the current donors. The donors do not contribute equally, and there is no formula determining

donor contributions. A couple of times per year, GWP holds a meeting for the Financial Partners and presents the yearly plan. These partners then decide how much they would like to contribute. While this kind of flexibility allows the donors to continue to participate in the program but reduce their contributions during years when they are experiencing difficulties with their own budgets, it can be potentially difficult for GWP to financially plan from year to year. For example, GWP's 2001 budget was US$7.758 million. In 2002 it is US$12.58 million. Again, GWP's flexibility has allowed it to meet this challenge by allocating budget expenses conservatively and moving any surpluses over to the next year.

For 2002, running costs for the Secretariat total US$2 million, with the following expenditures: salaries, US$1 million; travel, US$0.2 million; consultants, US$0.25 million; office, US$0.2 million; and communication, US$0.38 million. In addition, a substantial amount of the budget is spent on meetings, as most of the coordination and facilitation work GWP does is through meetings. In 2003, approximately US$60,000 will be spent on website developments. Each region has their own budget allocation. Some of the activities which most influence participation (e.g., associated programs and tools) are not necessarily the greatest expense for the GWP network. However, this year as the ToolBox is expanded, its budget will be enlarged by over US$1.5 million.

ACTIVITIES

Activities are given a time frame and are included in the two-year work plans. For example, in the current 2001-2003 year work plan, the activities are broadly divided into four main areas:

❖ Building partnerships that take actions to introduce and implement IWRM. Examples include regional and country partnerships

❖ Ensuring GWP's Associated Programs provide required strategic support to the regions and countries

❖ Maintaining the IWRM ToolBox as a source of practical lessons learned from implementing IWRM

❖ Constructing a portfolio of regional actions on IWRM for presentation at the Third World Water Forum in Kyoto, Japan in 2003

GWP works through the regions to influence sector policies on IWRM. This is done through meetings that the GWP representative sets up with water professionals and decisionmakers. GWP has estimated that there are about three major meetings per region/year. Besides meetings, GWP offers a neutral platform for different stakeholders to come together and discuss pertinent IWRM issues. For example, the most recent global meeting was a program/planning meeting at HR Wallingford, UK, from February 18-21, 2001. Three representatives from each of the GWP regions met to discuss how their regional work integrates into the overall work program of GWP.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

❖ GWP has continued the strong leadership that has been able to manage conflicts between diverse global interests and participants.

❖ GWP has successfully brought in several relevant programs of its donors under its coordinating umbrella to address specific issues of IWRM and make them available to the network through its Associated Programs. It has also succeeded in coordinating with various related programs in IWRM outside of the existing donor programs and has influenced them in the IWRM strategy and in participating in their network.

❖ GWP has found that its ability to coordinate activities such as the Associated Programs and ToolBox directly influences participation. Participation is largely dependent on the number of activities that GWP has been able to coordinate for them in that region. In regions where GWP has more recently been involved, it appears that it takes time to build up this participation and for the network to become known.

❖ GWP is a demand-driven organization and responds to various demands from regions; this has facilitated participation. However, sometimes there is a need to target a specific group in order to encourage participation. For example, if women/gender nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have been in the minority or even left out of a certain process, GWP often sponsors travel and participation in an important meeting for a number of key persons from these organizations. GWP has played an important role in bringing the various stakeholders to the table.

❖ Through the ToolBox, network constituents have learned from earlier cycles of governance. The ToolBox is popular among participants and standardizes information between initiatives within countries, and regions, and between levels of network participants. In this activity, GWP has exceeded its expected results by 112 percent. For example, by the end of 2001, 49 tools were described and cross referenced (only 10 were expected); case study guidelines were developed; and 61 case studies were at various stages of the review process (only 17 were expected).

❖ GWP has helped to instill participation and motivate governments and leaders to advocate the changes that are needed for improved water resources management. GWP appeals to the full spectrum of participants—from harnessing the global leaders' political will to making change at the local project level. One important factor has been GWP's ability to steadily expand to cover all the regions. GWP has already built a network of regional technical committees in South America, Central America, Southern Africa, West Africa, the Mediterranean, Central and Eastern Europe, South Asia, and Southeast Asia and China. Central Asia was just included in 2001, and committees have been initiated in Central Africa, East Africa and in the Pacific region.

Key Factors of Successful Management

❖ GWP avoided the more controversial aspects of issues during the beginning stages of the network. It focused on building consensus and achieving results with the issues where solutions are more clear. For example, GWP selected interim goals that were "easy wins"—one goal led to an early success in a cooperation project in Africa.

❖ Many of GWP's activities and teams have specific time frames. For example, GW-MATE was given a set mandate to act over a period of three to five years to develop capacity and capability in groundwater resource management and quality protection. In addition, work plan activities are given a time frame for completion. However, perhaps one of the GWP's assets is that it is basically a permanent fixture for coordinating and promoting improvements in water management through the IRWM tool.

❖ GWP lets network constituents learn from earlier cycles of governance in water management through its ToolBox which gives examples of how a tool has worked in a given combination and context.

❖ GWP promotes collective learning by joining the leaders in its regional and country partnerships under a single strategy of IWRM.

❖ GWP has relied on the existing institutions of its donors to address specific issues of IWRM—GWP's role is coordination of these institutions through its Associated Programs to make them available to the network participants.

❖ GWP evaluates its progress towards its goals and expected outputs yearly. Evaluations measure the accumulated progress in percentage vis-à-vis achievements of expected outputs.

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Program Two
Locally Managed Marine Area Network

By Donna Nickerson, with contributions from Michael Guilbeaux, Manuel Mejia and John Parks (Network Portfolio Coordinating Team)

2

Origin

Initiated in August 2000, the lineage of the Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA) Network is with the Biodiversity Conservation Network of the Biodiversity Support Program (website: http://www.bsponline.org). The LMMA practitioners who had experience with the Biodiversity Support Network felt it would be useful to take this approach to the next step and apply it to the specific case of marine systems where adaptive management had been attempted. In the LMMA Network, project members in the Indo-Pacific Region go through an adaptive management cycle together and "test" the common hypothesis (i.e., dependence on marine resources; standard of living; leadership; governance; human population density, etc.) in their many different projects and organizations. The network seeks to answer the question: "Under what conditions will marine protected areas actually work in practice to help conserve dwindling marine resources?" The assumption of the LMMA Network was that by developing a common framework for learning, collecting an agreed upon set of data, sharing stories and experiences, and promoting peer mentoring, members of the learning portfolio can improve and learn more efficiently.

Since its beginning, the LMMA Network has remained flexible in its structure and approach. This has helped the participants learn from its decisions and experience in managing the network and allowed it to continue to improve by applying what it has learned at two levels: first, between projects in the individual countries, and second, between project members within the larger network that spans across regions. The network is currently at a very interesting period in its evolution: a group of

Reviewing community resource monitoring methods, Koror, Palau, 2002. Photographer: Nick Pilcher

participating projects will soon become the first full members of the network, taking on more active roles in the decisionmaking and practical functions of the network.

GOALS

The LMMA Network vision includes:

❖ Healthy ecosystems and communities, abundant fish and other marine resource stocks, and sustainable fisheries utilization

❖ Protected marine biodiversity

❖ Sustainable development in coastal communities

❖ Understanding of what communities are doing in managing marine areas

Putting learning into practice during training workshop for LMMA Network project staff and stakeholders, Kimbe Bay, Papua New Guinea, 2002. Photographer: Mathew Mowtell

❖ Understanding of ecological and socioeconomic responses to LMMA implementation

❖ Global awareness of the biological and social-economic science related to LMMA that is coming out of the Indo-Pacific

The overall goal of the LMMA Network is:

"… to reach the portfolio vision by forming a group of practitioners (both individuals and organizations) and researchers who are committed to sharing experiences and information on determining the conditions under which locally managed marine areas can contribute to conservation. We work together because we want to be able to take actions that have a high chance of measurable long-term success."

In reaching for these goals, the network follows these core values:

❖ Commitment (to the portfolio, to finding the truth) as a way to stay focused on goals

❖ Teamwork (inclusion of all voices such as community members and government officials) because more can be achieved working together than can be on our own

❖ Transparency (a willingness to share failures and mistakes as well as success stories) to promote open and honest sharing of information and experience

❖ Empowerment of individuals to take responsibility and be accountable for results

❖ Respect (e.g., valuing diverse perspectives) that makes it possible to challenge each other without threatening our relationships

❖ Fun that comes from our interactions with our partners and our satisfaction in our work

❖ Belief that a positive difference can be made

STRUCTURE

The structure of the LMMA Network is perhaps the most flexible and open of the networks reviewed in this report. It is based on projects or sites as the unit of analysis. One or more individuals represent each member project. This group of member projects is the core of the network. A unique feature of the network is a team of individuals who help the network function by facilitating and coordinating the learning between the Project Members. This coordinating team is known as the Network Coordination Team (NCT).

One key to success of the portfolio's open and evolving structure is that membership is strictly voluntary. A second factor is that the founders of the network had a solid working relationship with each other and the projects in the region before they decided to organize the network. These two factors alone have reduced the typical conflicts (e.g., of ownership and management) that often arise in other networks. Third, the NCT members of the portfolio are practitioners in the region and are accountable to their own projects and constituents.

DECISIONMAKING GROUPS

Project Members

Project membership is strictly voluntary. The criteria for selection as network members are those projects that have an LMMA site and strategy (i.e., community-based or locally managed and focused on a specific area or

site), and which are willing to: learn, practice adaptive management, share data, and collectively improve the practice. Currently, 20 projects from eight countries participate in the network. This includes 10 projects from the Pacific: Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, the Cook Islands, and Palau; and 10 projects from Southeast Asia: Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia.

New projects often come into the network through outreach meetings. The mechanism or means to bring in new members varies depending on each country. For example, in Fiji, new members hear about the network through "word of mouth" and personal encouragement.

Projects within the Indo-Pacific region that wish to participate in the LMMA Network can join in any one of three types or categories of membership. For example:

❖ Full Membership is available to projects that have completed initial membership obligations. These obligations include: obtaining support from local partners; completing an initial site description; developing a monitoring plan; collecting baseline data; and appointing project representatives to the portfolio. Projects that have Full Membership have decisionmaking rights in the portfolio. Decisions are made using a consensus-based approach, and it is envisioned that decisions will be made by project members during meetings, and when appropriate, via e-mail.

Many of the 20 projects mentioned above are now ready to become full members. Once they become Full Members, they will have a majority of responsibility for decisionmaking. Membership within the NCT will rotate on its own, relatively independent of project membership. NCT membership is a function of need rather than a set structure or rules for who will serve on the NCT.

❖ Provisional Membership is the starting point for all projects. It is for projects that are interested in joining the portfolio, but have not yet completed the membership obligations. Approximately 12 projects now have provisional membership.

❖ Associate Membership is for projects and others that do not want to be fully involved in the portfolio, but who want to be part of a broader network of practitioners and researchers focusing on the subject. Associate members do not have decisionmaking rights in the portfolio.

Papua New Guinea/LMMA biological monitoring training in Kimbe Bay, Papua New Guinea, November 13-23, 2002. Photographer: Mathew Mowtell

Network Coordination Team (NCT)

The network coordination structure consists of the portfolio coordination team that works with the individual member projects in the region. The NCT consists of six to eight individuals from the member projects who coordinate the activities of the overall LMMA Network. NCT members and projects are responsible for planning the network, diagnosing individual project needs and working with them on a regular basis, coordinating cross-project activities, coordinating portfolio-level analyses, and helping to communicate results. The NCT helps project teams build their capacity to collect information needed to assess conservation success, learn about the conditions under which a particular conservation strategy works, and improve the capacity of the members of the portfolio. Membership in the NCT is based on a pragmatic set of criteria that looks for representatives from countries where networks are most active, and for representatives who can easily work with each country and conform to the diverse needs of all regions. The role of the NCT in maintaining a comparative base between projects/members is important.

Currently, six individuals serve on the NCT. The dialogue between NCT members is frequent. They 'meet' regularly once a week via conference calls, and as a group once or twice a year. Serving on the NCT is not a full-time position. However, between 20-50 percent of the working week is devoted to the NCT. At the moment, the roles of the network coordinators include:

❖ Overall coordination of the network

❖ Assisting with fundraising

❖ Providing logistical and next steps coordination for network workshops, conducting training workshops, and/or meetings where the network voice will be present

❖ Providing access to different media outlets and with different policymakers

❖ Bringing network results into relevant external global discussions

❖ Providing a collective voice for the network as necessary

The Team: Community and nongovernmental organizations partners from Fiji and Papua New Guinea LMMA Networks train in standard coral reef monitoring methods and collect data for Fiji s first nationally gazetted marine protected area, Ulunikoro Marine Conservation Area. Location: Ulunikoro, Kadavu, Fiji.

Coordinators are expected to gain from their participation by:

❖ Obtaining information about the process of leaning networks

❖ Working with the network to communicate findings with interested audiences

The top priority of the network is providing project teams with the skills and training to do their own adaptive management to tell their own stories. For example, if a project team requests assistance in documenting their lessons learned in a format appropriate to present to decisionmakers, the NCT could develop a training module with reference materials about communication methods and guidelines on this topic for members of the portfolio.

FUNDING

Funding comes from the MacArthur Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. Some activities have received additional support from the Foundations of Success, the World Resources Institute, and the University of the South Pacific. Donors can be non-decisionmaking members of the portfolio. However, active participation from the donors has been a factor in the success of the LMMA. For example, the donor presence at the regional meetings was important in gaining the trust of the project members. In particular, the donors participated in the early important meetings to draft the social contract and for important decisions on the direction of the network.

Certain expectations exist for donors of the network. They should:

❖ Make concerted efforts to provide funds to portfolio participants for cross-project visits, portfolio meetings, monitoring support, publications, etc.

❖ Value lessons learned from failures as well as successes, and help get this message out

❖ Communicate the portfolio's vision with their respective Board of Directors and others

They are expected to gain from their participation by:

❖ Obtaining guidance and advice on other projects to fund in future years

❖ Accessing lessons learned and data that can be shared with Board of Directors

❖ Demonstrating how donors can support both learning and conservation at the same time

The current annual budget (excluding project support) is US$200,000. The funds support network operations, travel, and associated expenses. In the future, budget allocations will be decided by the full members.

ACTIVITIES

Activities revolve around the themes of developing a common learning framework, collecting an agreed upon set of data, sharing stories and experiences, and promoting peer mentoring.

❖ Activities completed include three workshops at the beginning of the initiative to develop a method to collectively learn from each other and to set the direction of the network. One important tangible result of these workshops was the development of a draft social contract, which was finalized at the third workshop in Bali, Indonesia, in 2002. This social contract is a mutually developed agreement that governs how the portfolio functions. It includes a vision statement, outlines ideas of what the members of the portfolio will do together, and describes the obligations and benefits of being a member. The social contract, while not a legal document, is an agreement among members of how the network is to operate.

❖ The network provides funds to portfolio participants for cross-project visits, training sessions, portfolio meetings, monitoring support, publications, etc.

Proposed portfolio activities with specific timeframes for the future include:

❖ Design and implement a plan to collect and analyze a comparable set of data to allow learning from each other's successes and mistakes

❖ Provide support and capacity building assistance to projects on an ongoing basis to collect this common data set. This includes first determining whether these data should be "standardized" or merely "comparable"

❖ Establish an appropriately functional and protected Internet website (www.LMMAnetwork.org) to store network data, analytical results, reports, etc. Specific rules and regulations on the access of such information will be developed by the group over time. A working group is being developed to define the data issue further and to make sure to include groups without web access.

❖ Promote cross-site visits that incorporate specific skills training

❖ Support a network coordination team that provides regular technical assistance in core skills

❖ Hold regular meetings at different sites on a rotating basis

❖ Establish country-specific teams that accommodate different language and skill levels

❖ Share logistical and technical information

❖ Set up study tours for decisionmakers (both government officials and traditional leaders)

❖ Engage with other coastal resource management initiatives

❖ Hold on-site training workshops that target specific skill development (linked to larger meetings if possible)

❖ Create joint policy briefs and educational materials based on collective learning

❖ Produce regular analyses and "stories" showing successes and failures with projects and the portfolio learning process

❖ Identify and establish links with specific resource people at key institutions and communities

❖ Engage in collective advocacy for locally managed marine areas

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

❖ Developed a draft social contract

❖ Developed an Intellectual Property Rights Statement, which is a set of practices or guideline for sharing ideas, experiences and information

❖ Projects are drawn into the network because it provides what projects need and want. For example, projects want and need to:

- Meet with their colleagues
- Discuss the issues in their fields
- Learn
- Have access to comparable data from other organizations and projects
- Secure a stronger, collective voice in policy debates with local, national and international audiences
- Become part of a growing community of experts on LMMAs
- Expand professional relationships

❖ At a local level, participants have learned that there is a benefit to consulting with each other and are now coordinating on a daily basis

❖ The network has helped to lessen competition and increase cooperation between projects and between NGOs and government agencies. For example, projects in Fiji that previously competed with each other for the same donor funds are now putting their own institutions aside and cooperating in developing joint projects. The projects have discovered that there are lots of demands for what the network is providing. This has brought in non-LMMA member projects to the network.

❖ Donors have openly stated that they will value failures of projects and themselves just as much as successes. This has been important as it has built a trust within the network between the donors and project members and has enabled projects to be open in telling their stories.

Key Factors of Successful Management

❖ Promoted collective learning by joining projects, individuals and leading organizations together in its regional and country partnerships under the single strategy or learning tool of LMMAs

❖ The LMMA Nework created simple incentives for participation in the network. The most important incentive and primary motivation was the opportunity to meet individuals from other projects, to exchange stories, and learn directly from them. A secondary incentive was that the network could enable projects to participate by offering access to much-needed travel funding.

❖ Donors are brought into the learning portfolio "philosophy" by having to subscribe to the same principles as Project Members

❖ Activities have specific time frames with specific tangible outcomes

❖ The LMMA Network got off to a strong start with two initial workshops that produced outcomes and a third that resulted in the social contract

Sources

Biodiversity Conservation Network of the Biodiversity Support Program website: http://www.bsponline.org

Foundations for Success—A foundation dedicated to supporting learning collaborations in resource management website: www.FOSonline.org

Locally Managed Marine Area Network website: http://www.LMMAnetwork.org

Reinicke, W.H. and F. Deng, with J.M. Witte, T. Benner, B. Whitaker, and J. Gershman. 2000. *Critical Choices*. The United Nations, Networks, and the Future of Global Governance. International Development Research Centre. Ottawa, Canada. 164 pp.

Program Three
Integrated Coastal Management Sustainability Project

By Donna Nickerson, with contributions from Patrick Christie (Sustainability Project, Project Leader)

3

Origins

This collaborative learning network is the only network reviewed that is not so much centered around a participatory process of collaborative learning, but is rather a research-oriented approach. While the practitioners of the ICM projects assessed within the network do help in making decisions, the principle decisionmakers are the Principal Investigators of the research team. These Principal Investigators are primarily academics at the University of Washington (US), Silliman University (Philippines) and Bogor Agricultural University (Indonesia). There are ICM practitioners from USAID-supported projects and NGOs involved in advisory roles. The network is intended to be a research-oriented collaborative learning project. It offers a perspective of what and how the academic community can learn among institutions in developed and lesser-developed countries regarding the study of the ICM field projects in which they assist and work.

The ICM Sustainability Project evolved from a three-year grant from USAID that linked the University of Washington's School of Marine Affairs in Seattle, Washington, with Silliman University and the Coastal Resources Management Project in the Philippines. Grant participants suggested that a logical next step in the exchange between the universities, their different coastal programs, and the theories on coastal management would be an applied research task that could go beyond an analysis of the "success" of ICM and lessons learned from individual ICM projects. Researchers wanted

to focus on "process sustainability" and whether "successes" in ICM have contributed to a pattern of self-sustaining behavior that would lead to the continual practice of ICM. The Philippines and Indonesia, in particular, offered an opportunity to observe earlier cycles of governance vis-à-vis a number of factors with their long history of ICM projects.

The ICM Sustainability Project is interested in the following questions:

❖ Has ICM been successful at embedding in individuals, communities, institutions and societies its underlying values?

❖ Has ICM in the Philippines and Indonesia been a self-sustaining process?

❖ What happens to the ICM process when donor support is withdrawn?

GOALS

The project seeks to determine what factors contribute to the sustainability of ICM processes after outside assistance (donor funding) has been withdrawn. To this end, project objectives include:

❖ **Empirical research** to identify factors and conditions, at various levels of governance and in different contexts, that influence ICM sustainability

❖ **Assist ongoing efforts** by providing policy recommendations and educational materials to aid ongoing and future ICM initiatives to improve the sustainability of coastal management in the Philippines and Indonesia

❖ **Improve human and institutional capacity** to strengthen institutional linkages between practitioner and research/educational institutions in the US, Philippines and Indonesia

STRUCTURE

DECISIONMAKING GROUP

Decisions are made at workshops and meetings with the project participants, which include the Research Team and ICM practitioners. The Advisory Team reviews the results and outputs coming from the Research Team to help ensure that recommendations are realistic. The Advisory Team currently has 11 members who hold positions in academia, field projects, NGOs and government.

Network Support Structure

The Research Team is made up of academics from the five universities. Currently, 12 members comprise the Research Team, which is lead by a project principal investigator. Research assistants are employed to help carry out the work.

The current focus of the project's research is to observe the impact of the following factors on ICM sustainability:

❖ Centralization of policy development

❖ Community-level characteristics and dynamics

❖ The role of legal consistency

❖ ICM-derived economic and bio-physical benefits, if existing

❖ ICM project strategies for human and institutional capacity development

❖ Financial mechanisms

❖ Use and management of information

❖ Globalization and market penetration into coastal communities

Research is organized into "Research Cells":

❖ Socio-cultural: focuses on community-level processes which affect ICM sustainability

❖ Legal-jurisdictional: studies the rules that frame, constrain or facilitate ICM

❖ Institutional: focuses on the dynamics between the communities, NGOs and government organizations that either foster or hinder ICM sustainability

❖ Resource Economics: delve on the benefit streams associated with ICM in the community and government level

❖ Biophysical: highlights ecological responses of coastal systems with respect to ICM sustainability

The research intentionally attempts to learn from earlier cycles of governance by studying historic projects at the identified sites vis-à-vis the capacity, social context, and political situation of the sites.

Reef survey work in the Philippines. Photographer: Patrick Christie

FUNDING

The core funding is from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the National Science Foundation. Staff support and cost sharing is provided by the University of Washington, Silliman University and Bogor Agricultural University.

ACTIVITIES

One of the first activities of the network was to identify potential collaborators that were outside the network, develop plans for working with them, and visit the organizations to establish a rapport and cooperation. Additional early activities included developing a comprehensive work plan for the two-year study, and completing the budget with project partners.

During the first year (2001), the project chose seven research sites in the Philippines. It agreed on timing and methods, developing protocols for the ethical treatment of research subjects, and conducting a literature review.

The research is being conducted in four principal phases:

❖ Focus group interviews of ICM experts to inform the succeeding phases

❖ Intensive multi-method, multi-disciplinary quantitative field research

❖ Qualitative field research which would put in context the patterns uncovered by quantitative study

❖ Limited field research (in two sites) in Indonesia that will test the relevance of the findings from the Philippines in a different context

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The following outputs for each of the three goals have been given short time frames and include:

Empirical research:

❖ Literature review

❖ White papers for each phase of research with cultural, legal, economic, biophysical and institutional analysis

❖ Peer-reviewed articles

Assist ongoing efforts:

❖ Training program for participating ICM projects

❖ Guidebook for improvement of ICM sustainability

Improve human and institutional capacity:

❖ Strengthened linkages between participating institutions

❖ Improved data collection and analysis skills for evaluative research

❖ Strengthened libraries in each institution

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

❖ The initial planning meeting enabled the researchers and other practitioners of coastal resource management to learn more about each other's skills and roles.

Collaborative data analysis in the Philippines. Photographer: Patrick Christie

❖ The literature review studied ICM sustainability from various perspectives: legal, institutional, socio-cultural, economic, political and ecological. Results indicated that these factors as well as project design and underlying contextual variables have considerable impact on ICM sustainability. These results helped to direct the current focus of the project's research.

❖ Produced a set of evocative propositions as an early result of the research. These will be examined further during the project. Included is that the majority of the earlier ICM initiatives at the sites have not been sustained beyond formal project termination. In addition, where these initiatives have been sustained, an indication of the most effective predictors of sustainability was identified.

❖ Promoted collective learning by joining leaders together in its regional and country partnerships under a single strategy or learning tool

❖ Raised the level of discussion within the projects studied of how they can improve to achieve a "sustainable process" after the life of their projects. For individual practitioners, the research has provoked an internal debate of

how they can improve on their own methods and inputs into their project in order to achieve a sustainable process.

❖ Expected research outputs are on schedule; these include draft white papers and, by the end of 2002, a set of educational materials or blue books. Factors of sustainability are currently identified and in draft form. Final papers and subsequent guidelines will be final in 2003.

Key Factors of Successful Management

❖ Focus of the network on the tangible outcomes and the completion of those outcomes (e.g., the results from the literature review and the initial set of propositions)

❖ Research explicitly allows the project participants to learn from earlier cycles of governance by studying historic projects at the identified sites vis-à-vis the capacity, social context, and political situation of the sites

❖ Management of conflicting approaches to both ICM implementation (i.e., approaches that favor fishing communities versus those that favor tourist development and hotels, etc.), and research approaches (i.e., theoretical versus empirical)

Sources

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Key Factors of Success in Network Management

Below is a summary of some of the key factors that resulted in the success and accomplishments of the three collaborative learning networks reviewed. Some of these factors support general themes that were found in the review of networks by Reinicke and Deng (2000).

❖ Many of the same factors that help to determine success in ICM programs (i.e., program leadership that manages participants as a team in areas of conflict resolution; involvement and coordination; establishing sustainable financing; etc.) are also crucial for successful network management. For example, network managers need similar leadership skills, characteristics, and qualities as are found in coastal managers. These include patience; adaptability; flexibility; managing conflicts between interests and participants; creation of a common vision; and objectives; and ensuring participation from multiple sectors. Additional common factors that have to do with the overall programs include: directing research at management questions/uncertainties; setting management goals with quantifiable objectives and timelines; using task forces with a specific mandate and timeframe to help resolve difficult issues; and avoiding the more controversial aspects of issues during the beginning stages of the network and instead, focus on building consensus and achieving results with the issues where solutions are more clear.

❖ It is important to get the right people on board from the start. These include team players, democratic leaders, etc. In addition, it is important to create a common vision or set of principles with these individuals from the early stages. One way to do this is for the network to continue educating others on its vision and promoting its objectives with the general constituency.

❖ It is important to gain a "usefulness" or legitimacy early on. This gives a sense of purpose to the network and instills confidence with the

participants. One key factor in gaining legitimacy is to avoid the more controversial aspects of issues during the beginning stages of the network, as discussed above. Other strategies for creating legitimacy include focusing first on the narrow, specific and technical dimensions of a larger problem. By doing this, the network gains time with its constituencies to work on the larger problems. These problems need more consultation and deliver intangible, but important, outcomes that create a sense of trust between participants.

❖ Specific timeframes with set objectives need to be established

❖ Maintain a focus on short- and medium-term operational goals of the network and provide proof to the partners that the network is producing tangible outcomes and benefits and not becoming a bureaucracy—that is, getting trapped in the process.

❖ One of the common objectives of many networks is to link initiatives within a region together so they can learn from each other. Leaders of these initiatives need to have an incentive for participating in the extra efforts a network demands. Therefore, in order for initiatives to learn from each other, a network needs to provide incentives for their participation. Examples include:

- The "inclusion issue." Most participants will be primarily interested in what is happening at the local or regional level—not only because they can more easily contribute at this level, but also because they have the most to gain from exchange at the local and regional level. Networks will attract project leaders to participate if they can offer the opportunity to improve and enhance their own conservation efforts. In fact, this incentive to participate is the common sense appeal that collective learning has to the leaders of individual projects.
- Focus of the network on the tangible outcomes
- Focus on a common tool or a set of tools (the LMMA Network of the Foundations of Success, and the ToolBox of the GWP are examples), which provides a common framework for comparison between each others initiatives so that participants can use the same terms between programs

- Provide the next step after initiatives successfully learn from each other
- Motivate and provide a platform for governments and leaders of existing programs to advocate for the changes that are needed

❖ Presence of a framework of learning that lets network participants learn from earlier cycles of governance vis-à-vis the complexity of the program, the capacity, social context, and political situation of the sites

❖ Promote collective learning by joining leaders together in regional and country partnerships under a single strategy or learning tool

❖ Establish an independent external review to assess the accomplishments of the network after a given period of time and make recommendations for further action

SOURCE

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